796 The Coorgs perform another ceremony called ghost-mask (*karanakola*)
769 with the object of finding out the particular wishes of the ghosts. It is
787 performed every second or third year and occasionally also every year. For this, the services of a Malayali performer, a Panikkan or Benna, are requisitioned. At night he puts on, one after the other, five or more different costumes to represent the number of ancestors especially remembered at the
[534] time. Arrayed in these different costumes, he dances to the accompaniment of a drum beaten by his companions and behaves as if he were possessed by
[782] the Coorg ghosts. After each kola or mask, he leaves the house with a fowl, a coconut, fried rice and other eatables, and some arrack, and offers them in the courtyard to a particular ghost. Various questions are put to him by the members of the family and by the neighbours while he is in a state of trance. The food given him during the trance is called *Karana Barani*. The masks having been finished, a pin especially fattened for the purpose is decapitated in front of the *Kaimatta* and then taken up to be given to the performer. The rest of the carcase and bodies of the fowls
[782] decapitated are taken to the house. In the absence of a *Kaimatta*, the pig offering takes place at the *Karanakotta*. Women also behave likewise, when possessed by an ancestral spirit. While thus affected, they roll on the ground, but they do not give utterance to oracular responses. Some-
[785] times sorcerers, Coorgs or aliens, are invited to exorcise the ghosts. With the recitations of certain formulae in loud tones, they resort to flagellation. If it proves ineffectual, offerings are given.

Village Gods

776 Tradition has it that human sacrifices were offered in former times to
782 secure the blessings of Grama Devatas, Mariamma, Durga, and Bhadrakali, who are supposed to protect the villages or nads from all evil influences. These deities have their annual feasts among the Coorgs, but they pay special attention to Ajappa, Kaliat Ajappa, and Kuttamma in Kiggatnad, whose shrine is annually visited with gifts.

Every forest ground has its presiding deity to which an annual sacrifice of pork and cakes is offered. If it is not propitiated, the *Kadevaru*, the tending god, will withdraw his favour, and sickness and death among cattle will ensue. Besides, there are extensive forests called Devarukadu, which are untrodden by human foot and reserved for the abodes or hunting grounds of deified heroic ancestors.

Serpent Worship

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825 Traces of serpent worship or tree worship are found in Coorg. The *Natas* or spots on which cobras have finished their course of terrestrial life are the place of solemn ceremonies. To prevent any human being from setting foot on the hallowed spot, it is marked by a little stone enclosure.

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

During the month of November, a lamp is lighted every evening to Natas, and coconuts are offered as oblations.

Pilgrimage

The Coorgs go on pilgrimage to Irjatre at the foot of Lakshmana-tirtha fall in Kiggatnad after the Sivaratri in February or March, and on the Talai Kaveri Jatra to the source of the river Cauvery in October. Amongst the Jatra beyond their country, those visited by the Coorgs are four, Subramania on the northern frontier of Coorg in December, Baitur in Malabar, in February, and Nanjangudu in Mysore which comes off in December. In exceptional cases they go to Benares.

Demon Worship

The Coorgs are demon worshippers because of the evil influences of certain malignant spirits, which can render their life more gloomy and wretched. The demons are called Kulis, who are believed to be capable of carrying away the souls of the dying members in a family. When any trouble arises in a house, and strange voices are believed to be heard in or near it, a *Kanya* (a Malabar astrologer) is consulted as to the cause of it, and he speaks of the influence of some *Kuli* who must have carried away the soul of somebody either in the house or in the neighbourhood. He suggests that a demon mask has to be performed for the liberation of the soul. It takes place once a year at Kutta, or at any other place once in two or three years.

The master of the house ties some money in a piece of cloth which is suspended from a rafter of the house as a pledge for the performance of the ceremony. Sometimes he ties his brass plate up there and eats his food on a plantain leaf as a vow. For the demon mask, either a Malayali magician or a true Ajjala Palya is sent for, and the ceremony is performed in the courtyard of the house owner. Demon masks are performed in the name of one or two of the five demons, Bhamundi, Kallugutti, Panjurli, Gulika and Goraka. The details of the ceremony are the same as those described for the exorcism of the ancestral spirits. The food of the performer in trance is called Kuli Barani. The liberation of the soul is thus effected. The demon that has thus committed the theft begs to leave the soul free. In the event of his refusal, the performer throws a handful of rice on the member of the house standing near him, and thus transfers the spirit to him. The spirit alights on his back, when he falls in a swoon, and is soon carried away by others into the house. The final act of a demon mark is the decapitation of pigs in front of the so called *kuzhikota* or demon abode. It may be near to or far away from the house or village. Fowls are sacrificed upon it. One pig suffices for house affair, but several pigs are required when a whole village is involved. The heads are given to the performers, and the trunks supply the house or village diviner.

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224 554 588 C. Cariappah, the Subadar of the taluq, having shot a tiger. Under a screen, on a wedding chair, his face towards the carcass sat the hero of the day, clothed in Coorg warrior costume and covered with flower wreaths and gold ornaments. Behind him stood his armour-bearers, in front the sacred house lamp on a heap of rice, poured into a brass dish. First each [431] member of his house, men, women and children, then all his [514] friends, one by one, stepped up to the bridegroom; strewed a handful of rice from the brass dish over his head, gave him from a brass vessel a sip of milk to drink and in making obeisance, dropped a silver coin into his lap. This money is given with a view to defray the impending expenditure on a sumptuous dinner, given to the whole company. A Coorg dance round the tiger concludes the tamásh and the night wears away with singing and feasting.

*136 [654] Government has now fixed a reward of Rupees five for the destruction of a tiger and Rupees three for that of a cheeta; but the unmutilated skin with the clows has to be delivered to the Sirkar. The height of the tiger varies from 3 to 4 and his length from 6 to 7 feet to which 3 feet may be added for the length of the tail. His weight is from 250 to 400 lbs.

[301] [789] Sometimes one sees children with the ornament of 2 tiger's claws, joined together by silver or gold and suspended round the neck. This charm is supposed to keep off the evil eye.

● [825] The age of a tiger is said to be ascertained by the number of lobes of his liver, one lobe being added every year!

The cheeta (*Can.* kiruba) or panther is more common than the tiger. It is a very destructive beast to smaller domestic animals. In his depredations he is a coward, chiefly attacking his prey by night and fleeing man, if unmolested.

[554] Upon the destruction of a cheeta by a Coorg, the same festivities, as on the tiger hunt, take place, but there is less honour to the sportsman. The skin of the cheeta is spotted with

1 1 [Errata: this should read "claws". See Corrigenda sheet, Cat. 116, P. 473 -- Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

classes are fond of its flesh and the poor animal is pursued on all sides by man and beast. It is caught in nets and traps. Rabbits thrive very well and are frequently kept in houses.

There is one kind of porcupine (*Can.* mullu-handi i. e. thorny pig) which like the mungoose lives on shrubby Bâne land, and is hunted for its flesh by smoking it out of its holes or by shooting it. The quills are thrown away; for the natives believe, that, if kept in the house, their presence will occasion quarrels amongst the inmates. In the Ghats one may occasionally observe the destructive operations amongst the ant-hills of the Badgereit or scaly ant-eater (Manis pendadactyla, *Can.* chippina-bekku i. e. scaly cat). Its flesh is eaten and its scales are used as the supports of fiddle and harp strings.

Homebred horses there are none in Coorg, except those wretched Tats, which are kept by Mussulman residents for carrying loads; but "Young Coorg" is fond of smart Pegu ponies or the powerful Kandahar horses. The damp monsoon climate is, however, not conducive to the health of well bred horses, especially new arrivals from a drier country. The Pegu pony is best suited both to the climate and hilly country. The washerman's donkey and the hybrid goat stand the climate equally well, but sheep do not thrive, except in the eastern districts. The long continued rains and the droughts during March and April which are incidental in these months, are unfavourable to the breeding of horned cattle; but, with proper housing and with an economical saving of the decaying grass, that is annually swept away by the jungle fires, and that should be stored up as hay for stall feeding, the Coorg cattle might be greatly improved. Little care, if any, seems to be bestowed upon the selection of bulls for breeding purposes; beasts of every description and age run promiscuously in the herd, and as there is no check by separating inferior bulls or emasculating them, the progeny must deteriorate. In the Kanawe districts, cattle of the finest des-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

*136 frequently seen. His plumage is very handsome, glossy white the head, neck and breast, and beautifully brown the back, wings and tail. In Hindoo mythology it is Vishnu's vehicle and therefore held in high veneration by the natives. He is a useful bird as he devours noxious reptiles, but sometimes he also carries away an unguarded chicken. The *Pariah kite* (Milvus Govinda) is very common and easily recognised by its greyish, brown speckled plumage and short shrill screech whilst soaring over its domain in small circles. He is the scavenger of animal refuse thrown from the cookroom, but preys chiefly on reptiles, which he carries off with a swoop, and devours flying. The sparrow hawk (Accipiter nisus), the Kestrel-falcon (Tinnunculus alandarius), the Sultan and the perigrine falcon (Falco peregrinator and peregrinus) are not unfrequently seen from the hill tops, soaring over the forests in pursuit of their winged prey. The Rajahs used the larger kind of falcon, the Kembakki (red bird) for hunting. The swiftness and majestic flight of the falcon is proverbial with the Coorg bards, who sing of the departed hero: "Like the falcon in the sky, thou wast roaming here on earth." In the eagle-fight we have already been introduced to the *Great Owl* (Bubo maximus; *Can.* guma); but there is also a smaller kind, which on house tops in nightly solitude often disturbs and frightens with its moaning cry: "Waugh O! Waugh O!" the sleeping inmates, by whom the owl is greatly dreaded. My keeping one as a pet some years ago was regarded by the Coorgs with grave apprehension and, afterwards, when I was laid up with jungle fever, the cause was ascribed to the presence of the ominous bird.

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The *Insessores* or Perchers are largely represented in each of the five tribes. Amongst the Fissirostres there is the gregarious *Bee-eater* (merops) of both a larger and a smaller green variety. They prey upon insects like the swallows, of which there are also several species found in Coorg. The *Goat-*

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*136 serve to lead the curious upon the right track. The Cobra di capella or Hood Snake (Naia tripudians; *Kg.* Nalla pámbu = good snake, in the sense of Eumenides?) is more frequent in the bamboo than in the málo district, and often takes possession of an out-hill for its habitation, but also deserted huts and the thick thatch of out-houses are its favourite haunts. It is kept and worshipped in demon temples and sometimes in rooms to guard treasure. In a specimen 5 feet long just examined, the hood which is formed by the expanded skin of the neck, when the snake is excited, measured 7 inches in length and 4¼ in breadth. It is whitish in front and black on the lower part of the back, shading off into brown and white towards the flattened head; in the middle of the hood there is a peculiar mark resembling a pair of spectacles with the bridge downward, the frame being white and the space of the imaginary glasses black. Before an attack the cobra half raises its coiled body into a graceful curve, dilates its hood and swaying to and fro, its bifid tongue quivering all the while, it keeps its victim spell bound with its fiendish brilliant eyes, till it darts forward and hissing inflicts its deadly wound. In spite of the most strenuous exertions of science, combined with benevolence, no infallible remedy has yet been discovered against the bite of the cobra, and all the boasted native charms have proved worthless, though snake charmers have by their knowledge of the habits of the cobra and by the influence of the melancholy strain of their rude flageolet acquired a great power over the reptile.

The number of the poison fangs of this and all other venomous snakes, is but two, one in front of each side of the upper jaw, and they lie flat along the roof of the serpent's mouth, whilst at rest. The fangs are curved inside and as sharp as the finest needle, yet they are hollow and their root is in direct communication with the venom ducts behind them. In biting the same muscle that raises the fangs compresses

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

the venom ducts and by the force of the actual bite a drop of the venom is injected through the channel of the fangs into the tiny wound and in a few minutes the whole system of the victim is poisoned and inevitable death ensues. Varieties of the cobra with hood and mark are the Pillandi-murga and the kád-murga, the former is greyish white and 1 to 1½ foot long, the latter is dark brown; their bite is less poisonous. The Kare-náda (black snake) with white marks about the throat, is 8 or 10 feet long and very rapid in its movements. It is found in dense forests and is sometimes washed down by the mountain torrents. Its bite causes death within half an hour. The late Rajah is said to have ascertained the power of the venom by experimenting upon sheep and buffaloes. The bite of the Patte-kolaka produces festering sores over the body; the Coorgs string the bones of this snake together and wear them as a charm against sores or swelling of the glands. There are three kinds of Cardamom-snakes: the green, the black and the grey Mandoli or Kummepámbu or Kurudu-mandoli which during the day are in a state of torpor, but active at night. On this account the natives term them "blind snakes"; they are often trodden upon by the cardamom cultivators, but a certain charm is said to render the poison innocuous. The kádu-bale and kére-bale muri or the jungle and tank Bracelet-snakes have white rings round their dark body, which become visible when the snakes are irritated. They are from 4 to 6 feet in length. The Pachi-balli-murga is dangerous to cattle whilst grazing.

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Amongst the innocuous snakes the largest is the Perampámbu (big snake) or Rock-snake, a kind of Boa constrictor, which grows to a length of 12 to 15 feet and has in thickness the girth of a man's thigh. It even devours spotted deer and, after the monsoon, is often shot by Coorgs in the cardamom jungles. Next in size is the Black-tank or Rat-snake

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243 492 [772] [825] plough and two labourers. On Monday he does not plough with bullocks, but buffaloes only, considering Monday as the day of the bullock's creation.

243 Whatever of cattle manure and dry leaves has been collected during the year is in the dry season carried by the women to the fields in large baskets and deposited in little heaps which are there burnt and the ashes are subsequently strewn over the ground. With the first showers in April and [354] May the ploughing commences. On a propitious day before sunrise the house-lamp—Táli-akki-balake (dish-rice-lamp)—which plays a conspicuous roll on all festive occasions, is lighted in the inner verandah, the housepeople assemble and invoke their ancestors and Kávéri Amma for a blessing; the young men make obeisance to their parents and elders and then drive a pair of bullocks into the paddy-fields, where they [782] turn the heads of the beasts towards the east. The landlord now offers cocoanuts and plantains, rice and milk to the presiding deity of his Nád, and lifting up his hands in adoration to the rising sun invokes a blessing. The oxen are yoked and three furrows ploughed, when the work is finished for that morning. Of the turned earth they take a clod home to the store-house or granary praying Shiva to grant them a hundred-fold increase. This recognition of the source of material wellbeing, is followed by personal industry that should command success.

From 6 to 10 in the morning the ploughing is continued till all the fields are turned over 2 or 3 times. Then the borders are trimmed, the channels cleaned and the little banks between the fields repaired, to regulate the water.

By the end of May one part of the fields which commands a permanent water supply and which has been well manured, is prepared for a nursery by repeated ploughing and harrowing, whilst the whole field is submerged. For every hundred buttics of land from 2 to 2½ butties of grain are required for

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

preparations ended, the body is carried into the middle apartment (nadumane) of the house and laid upon a funeral bed, near to which a lighted lamp is placed. Instead of oil, those who can afford it, burn on this occasion clarified cow's butter in half a cocoanut placed on a handful of rice in a copper-dish. The whole company gathers round him and breaks out into loud wailing, beating the breast, tearing the hair, much in the usual Hindu style. Guns are also fired in honor of the dead. Towards evening the corpse is brought into the yard, a little water is poured into its mouth by the relatives, and a piece of money deposited in a copper-dish, containing a little cocoamilk, saffron, rice and well-water. Now the body is carried to the burial or burning ground. Each funeral guest approaches, dips his finger into the copper dish, moistens the lips of the corpse with a drop or two, and lays a piece of money into the plate. This collection goes to defray the expenses of the funeral. After all present have thus taken their last leave of the departed, the body is deprived of the ornaments, and laid in the grave or upon the pile, the contents of the funeral-lamp-dish are thrown upon it, and now the covering of the grave, or the burning of the pile, concludes the ceremony. Before this last scene, however, some relatives must be set apart for funeral observances until the Dhiti, the great ceremonial day, which is sometimes celebrated on the 28th day after the death of a person, i. e. at the end of the lunar month in which the decease has occurred, sometimes later, as late as six months, when peculiar honor is intended to be done to the departed. In the interval the relatives, who offer themselves for this service, have to perform a lesser course of fasting. They forego the early and the second meal, at six and nine o'clock. At noon they bathe, prepare their own food, eat part of it themselves (it consists of rice and a little pickled vegetables), and give the rest to the crows, which consume it for the dead. When the Dhiti,

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the occasion a large concourse of people, chiefly Siváchárics, collect round the tombs, to pay their respects; or, at any rate, to participate in the liberal charity, dispensed at the time from the Government Treasury.

The people of Coorg have also great faith in a certain *Kaliatanda Ponnappa* or simply *Kaliat-Achchappa*, the spirit of a Malayálam man, who came to Coorg, many generations ago, was naturalized, married a Coorg-woman, and established himself at Nálknád. He was a great magician, and long the dread of the Coorgs. At last he was shot near the Cutchéri of Nálknád taluq. Since his death his spirit has possessed men, who give themselves to the strange arts that he practised. A similar worship is still maintained in honor of Achanaik in Chickamundúru in Kiggatnád.

Higher even than Kaliat-Achchappa, in the estimation of all Coorg, stands a certain female devil, at Kutta, called *Kuttadamma*. Kutta lies at the borders of the Wynád. Kuttadamma has no temple. The sanctuary is under a tree in the forest. The Pújári is a young man, the only person left of the family, which has engaged in this worship. Large sums of money are annually sent thither by people from all parts of Coorg. Many vows are paid to Kuttadamma in behalf of sick people or of the dead. And whether a sick person recover or die, the sum vowed for his recovery must be paid; or woe to the living! Liberal presents are also given to the man in charge of Kuttadamma, to engage her services against enemies, who, they say, are distressed or destroyed altogether by the demon, in answer to the prayers of her priest.

Each Báne (parcel of grass or forest-ground) has a presiding divinity, to which an annual sacrifice of pork and cakes is offered. If this sacrifice be not made, or not properly performed, the *Kádévaru* (the tending god, i. e. the god watching over the cattle) will withdraw his favour, and sickness and death among the cattle will ensue.

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778 Besides the many groves set apart in each Nád for some object of worship, but chiefly for *Ayappa-dévaru*, there are some extensive forests, called *Dévara-kádu*, which are untrodden by human foot and superstitiously reserved for the abodes or hunting grounds of deified heroic ancestors. These forests are: the *Iggudappa-dévara-kádu* in Pádinalknád, the *Chómamale* in Katiednád and the *Iruli-báne* in Kuyingherinád.

821 796 782 [791] [761] Another annual sacrifice every house has to offer to a peculiar divinity called *Gulika*. This is an invisible constellation or star, belonging both to the order of planets and to that of the zodiacal stars (it is, as the people say, a son of Shani or Saturn). No mortal eye sees it. The astrologer only knows the Gulika and its power, especially over the sick. A stone is placed for the Gulika at the foot of some tree possessed of a milky juice. There the Coorg offers every year fowls, cocoanuts and a little brandy in a dish of plantain-leaves to his tutelary numem. In cases of frequent deaths in a family, a second Gulika, called *Mrityu-Gulika* (death-gulika) is worshipped.

778 825 Another object of solemn ceremonies are the *Nátas*, the spots on which cobra capellas have finished their course of terrestrial life. According to Coorg lore, the cobra capella lives a thousand years! When it has passed the meridian of its long life, its body begins to shrink and to brighten, till it shines like silver, and measures three feet or less at the age of six or seven hundred years. Still later, the reptile shines like gold, and is only one foot in length. At last it shrinks to the size of a finger. Then it will some day fly up high into the air, die and sink down upon the ground, where it disappears altogether. No man sees it, but, of course, the Kanya knows the important secret, which he will communicate for a consideration to the proprietor of the land. Should any human being, unawares, set foot upon the hallowed spot, incurable disease of the skin will break out upon his person,

[791] [753]

I ∧ [Errata: This should read "cobra di Capella." See Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 493, -- Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

and the poor wretch will rot away by degrees. To prevent such disasters, the Náta place is marked by a little stone enclosure. During the month of Scorpio (November—December) a lamp is lighted every evening to the Náta, and cocoanuts are offered as oblations.

c. Astrology and Sorcery.

The ministers of Coorg superstition, the Kanyas, Panikas, Maleyas and Bannas make a handsome livelihood. The Kanyas find much work for the conjuring confraternity, dependent, in a great measure, upon their friendly patronage. The Kanya (astrologer) has complete mastery over the minds and, to a great extent, over the pockets of the credulous Coorgs. For a consideration in the shape of a purse of rupees, he writes the horoscope of the individuals who apply to him. Such is his cleverness, that he requires only to know the name of a person, in order to calculate the year, month, day and hour of his nativity. He is also the oracle of the Coorgs in cases of sorcery and witchcraft. It is believed by the Coorgs, that misfortunes, such as diseases of men or cattle, and deaths in the family or the herd, rarely come upon them in the natural order of things. The knowledge of an all-ruling Providence seems to have no place in their minds. Every severe affliction or great loss is ascribed to magic art or "an enemy hath done this." To find out the author of the mischief, and to induce or force him to keep the peace, is the only method that suggests itself to such people for obtaining deliverance from trouble. Application is made to some famous Kanya, who consults his books and caudies (little shells used for dice), and discovers the secret enemy's place, house, stature, age, etc. The man is called before a Panchâyat, and the case is discussed in the Parpatigára's Cutchéri. If things are not settled before this tribunal, the parties go to the Subadar, and frequently the quarrel is carried before the

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On the north side, a little below the temple, there is a small tank with perennial water, which is considered holy, but 100 years ago it is said to have been defiled by a Chándála woman bathing in it, when the spring ceased to flow for some time.

On the south-east ridge a cave is shown which, according to Brahminical discovery, offered an asylum to the exiled Pándus! After their departure the cave was occupied by a tiger, which with due respect for the játre quits his abode 7 days before the feast and afterwards returns.

On the precipitous side of the rock there are nests of vultures and several hundreds of beehives.

For seven days before the Tulásankramana in the village Mugutagéri at the foot of the hill, the ryots assemble one from each house at the Mandu and sing Coorg chants in praise of Isvara. On the night of the 7th the inhabitants of the whole nád come together, disguising themselves in masks of 18 various descriptions, they then go to the Ambala and dance and sing to the sound of the tomtom. The day following a light hollow frame, representing a horse, made of cane-work, is decked out so as to hide the lower part of the man's body who carries it, making it appear as if he rode the horse. The multitude then ascend the hill in procession, headed by the horse and a band of musicians, dance round the temple and bring their offerings of water, fruit and money.

The *Pálúr játre* in Kuyingherinád in honor of Pálúrappa, brother of Iggudappa, is a similar affair, which takes place in the month of April. The temple was rebuilt only a few years ago at a considerable expense and chiefly by the exertions of a Coorg official whose zeal and devotion one could wish had been employed in a better cause, especially in the education of his ignorant and superstitious nád people!

Amongst the játres beyond this country those visited by the Coorgs are four: *Subramanya* on the northern frontier of Coorg, which, in December, attracts a great number of people,